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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/553,580	06/05/2006	Michinobu Tanioka	19246	1492
23389 7590 04/09/2008 SCULLY SCOTT MURPHY & PRESSER, PC 400 GARDEN CITY PLAZA SUITE 300 GARDEN CITY, NY 11530				
EXAMINER				
VELEZ, ROBERTO				
ART UNIT		PAPER NUMBER		
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Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/553,580

Applicant(s)

TANIOKA ET AL.

Examiner

Roberto Velez

Art Unit

2829

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 11 March 2008.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-20 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) _____ is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 11-20 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 26 October 2007 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-8508)
- Paper No(s)/Mail Date 10/17/2005
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
- Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Continued Examination Under 37 CFR 1.114

1. A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, including the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e), was filed in this application after final rejection. Since this application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, and the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, the finality of the previous Office action has been withdrawn pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114. Applicant's submission filed on 03/11/2008 has been entered.

Response to Arguments

2. Applicant's arguments, see Remarks (Page 7), filed 03/11/2008, with respect to the rejection(s) of claim(s) 1-10 under 102 (e) have been fully considered and are persuasive. Therefore, the rejection has been withdrawn. However, upon further consideration, a new ground(s) of rejection is made in view of Hagihara et al. (US Pat. 6,344,752).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

3. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

4. Claims 1, 4, 6-7 and 9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Hagihara et al. (US Pat. 6,344,752).

Regarding claim 1, Hagihara et al. (shows Fig.1-2 and 10) an inspection probe [1] for inspecting electrical properties of a semiconductor device [W], comprising: a base member [2]; wiring layers [6] mounted on the base member [2]; probe pins [8] having tips [9A], electrically connected to the wiring layers [6] (Col. 6, Ln 13-16), protruding from the base member [2]; first metal layers [9B] provided to the tips [9A] of the probe pins [8]; and second metal layers [3] formed on the wiring layers [6], the second metal layers [3] being made of a material different from that of the probe pins [8] (any combination of nickel, nickel alloy, and nickel-cobalt alloy as suggested in Col. 5, Ln 15-18 and 58-60), wherein the first metal layers [9B] and the second metal layers [3] are physically separated from each other by the probe pins [8].

Regarding claim 4, Hagihara et al. discloses everything as claimed above in claim 1; in addition, Hagihara et al. shows (Figures 1-2) wherein the base member [2] has a plurality of the probe pins [8].

Regarding claim 6, Hagihara et al. discloses everything as claimed above in claim 1; in addition, Hagihara et al. discloses wherein the first metal layers [9B] and the second metal layers [3] are made of heterogeneous material (nickel and tungsten carbide, as disclosed in Col. 5, Ln 15-18 and 62-65).

Regarding claim 7, Hagihara et al. discloses everything as claimed above in claim 1; in addition, Hagihara et al. discloses wherein the first metal layers [9B] have hardness higher than that of the external terminal electrodes of the semiconductor device [W] (Col. 5, Ln 62-65).

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Regarding claim 9, Hagihara et al. discloses everything as claimed above in claim 1; in addition, Hagihara et al. shows (Figures 2 and 10) wherein the probe pins [8] form an angle of 0 to 45 degrees with respect to a face on which the electrodes of the semiconductor device [W] are formed (As shown in figures 2 and 10, probe pins will be parallel to the electrodes of the semiconductor device. Therefore, probe pins 8 will form an angle of 0 degrees with respect to a face of the electrodes of the semiconductor device W.).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

5. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

6. Claims 2-3, 5 and 8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hagihara et al. (US Pat. 6,344,752).

Regarding claim 2, Hagihara et al. discloses everything as claimed above in claim 1.

Hagihara et al. fails to disclose wherein the first metal layers are made of a material having good contact properties selected depending on a material of external terminal electrodes of the semiconductor device.

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to make the first metal layers with a material having good contact properties selected depending on a material of external terminal

electrodes of the semiconductor device. The ordinary artisan would have been motivated to modify Hagihara et al. in the manner set forth above for the purpose of using a material that will allow the first metal layers to obtain good measurements with high accuracy.

Regarding claim 3, Hagihara et al. discloses everything as claimed above in claim 1.

Hagihara et al. fails to disclose wherein the second metal layers have a volume resistivity less than that of the wiring layers.

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to make the second metal layers with a volume resistivity less than that of the wiring layers. The ordinary artisan would have been motivated to modify Hagihara et al. in the manner set forth above for the purpose of controlling the amount of current or voltage being applied to the electrodes in order to avoid damaging the electrodes.

Regarding claim 5, Hagihara et al. discloses everything as claimed above in claim 1.

Hagihara et al. fails to disclose wherein the first metal layers and the second metal layers are made of homogeneous material.

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to make the first metal layers and the second metal layers of homogeneous material. The ordinary artisan would have been motivated to modify Hagihara et al. in the manner set forth above for the purpose of saving

cost on materials by avoiding the usage of different materials for the construction of the first metal layers and the second metal layers.

Regarding claim 8, Hagihara et al. discloses everything as claimed above in claim 1.

Hagihara et al. is silent about disclosing wherein a region for forming each first metal layer has a width wider than or equal to half of the width of the probe pins and a length longer than or equal to the sum of 1.0 time the size of the electrodes, the distance that the inspection probe is moved after the inspection probe coming in contact with the electrodes, the longitudinal positional tolerance of the probe pins, and the length determined based on the positional tolerance of the electrodes.

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to make each first metal layer in a region that has a width wider than or equal to half of the width of the probe pins and a length longer than or equal to the sum of 1.0 time the size of the electrodes, the distance that the inspection probe is moved after the inspection probe coming in contact with the electrodes, the longitudinal positional tolerance of the probe pins, and the length determined based on the positional tolerance of the electrodes. The ordinary artisan would have been motivated to modify Hagihara et al. in the manner set forth above for the purpose of maintaining a good contact alignment between probes and electrodes during testing in order to obtain high accuracy measurements.

7. Claim 10 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hagihara et al. (US Pat. 6,344,752) in view of Eldridge et al. (US Pat. 5,974,662).

Regarding claim 10, Hagihara et al. discloses everything as claimed above in claim 1; in addition, Hagihara et al. (shows Figures 2 and 10) a flexible, electrically connectable wiring substrate [11] placed between the base member [2] and an inspection substrate [T], for mounting the base member [2] thereon if the electrodes of the semiconductor device [W] are arranged at sides thereof, correspond to multiple pins [8], and must be connected to the inspection substrate [T].

Hagihara et al. fails to disclose wherein the first metal layers are made of a material having good contact properties selected depending on a material of external terminal electrodes of the semiconductor device. However, Eldridge et al. shows (Fig. 5) a flexible, electrically connectable wiring substrate [504] placed between the base member [506] and an inspection substrate [502] and a backup plate [530] mounted on the inspection substrate [502].

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to incorporate the teachings of Eldridge et al. into the device of Hagihara et al. by having a flexible, electrically connectable wiring substrate placed between the base member and an inspection substrate and a backup plate mounted on the inspection substrate. The ordinary artisan would have been motivated to modify Hagihara et al. in the manner set forth above for the purpose of securing the inspection probe in order to obtain high accuracy measurements.

Allowable Subject Matter

8. Claims 11-20 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

9. The following is a statement of reasons for the indication of allowable subject matter: the prior art of record, taken alone or in combination, fails to disclose or render obvious, an inspection probe comprising a support substrate which is integrated with peripheral portions of the base member with an adhesive member placed there between and which is made of the same material as a material of the base member, said support substrate being mounted on the inspection substrate, wherein the backup plate has a protrusive portion at a center area thereof such that the probe pins form a predetermined angle with respect to the electrodes of the semiconductor device, as further disclosed in claim 11.

Claims 12-20 depending from claim 11 are objected for the same reason.

Conclusion

10. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

Takekoshi et al. (US PGPUG 2001/0009376) discloses a probe arrangement assembly, method of manufacturing probe arrangement assembly, probe mounting method using probe arrangement assembly, and probe mounting apparatus.

Mathieu et al. (US Pat. 6,255,126) discloses lithographic contact elements.

11. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Roberto Velez whose telephone number is 571-272-8597. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday 8:00am- 4:30 pm.

12. If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Ha Nguyen can be reached on 571-272-1678. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

13. Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Roberto Velez/
Examiner, Art Unit 2829
04/04/2008

Art Unit: 2829

/Ha T. Nguyen/

Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit 2829